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## **Google Translate will speak Breton, Occitan and more than 100 other new languages**



Google Translate was launched in 2006 in just 2 languages, compared to 243 today. PixieMe - stock.adobe.com

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The popular translation tool, which already offers 133 languages, will add 110, including regional languages.

An extraordinary polyglot. Google translate added 110 languages to its repertoire this Thursday, on the occasion of its “largest addition ever”, including Breton and Occitan. “These new languages represent more than 614 million speakers, thus paving the way for translations for around 8% of the world population ,” welcomes the American Tech giant.

Among the added options are regional languages, including Breton and Occitan. Cantonese, Tamazight, Romani, Wolof, Panjabi and Q'eqchi' are also integrated. “Some are major languages in the world, with more than 100 million speakers. Others are spoken by small indigenous communities, and a few have almost no native speakers but are making revitalization efforts ,” the company specifies in a blog post. Languages such as Punjabi, the most widely spoken language in Pakistan, or Afar, the language spoken in Djibouti, Eritrea and Ethiopia, are available.

“The project lasted four years,” Isaac Caswell, software engineer for Google Translate, confides to our colleagues at [Ouest France](#) . “This update is the largest in Google Translate's history and extends to many more non-national languages and disenfranchised languages. It also includes more Creole languages than ever before, including French-derived Seychellois Creole and Mauritian Creole.

The new languages were chosen “based on a combination of requests received, the number of speakers and the amount of data available for the training models,” says Isaac Caswell. Catalyzed by the PaLM2 language model, the basis of its Gemini generative AI, Google used artificial intelligence to train its translation tool. “We consulted linguists, experts, translators and native speakers. They assessed the quality of the model and provided translations ,” adds the expert.

### **Breton demands and initiatives**

Last February, a Breton collective campaigned for the integration of the Breton dialect into Google Translate. A step “essential for Breton and Brittany to count in the world” explained David Lesvenan, president of the digital Brittany endowment fund. The public office for the Breton language had also set up a historical dictionary and a toponymic database. These tools aim to establish the Breton language in the digital sphere with more than 60,000 words translated.

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After adding 24 new languages in 2022 with Zero-shot technology, which allows a learning model to translate a language without relying on examples and therefore better personalize the rendering, Google launched a plan, called the thousand languages initiative. Objective: “create AI models that will support the 1000 most spoken languages in the world” .